



Press Release

District of Columbia National Guard



Major General Errol R. Schwartz
Commanding General

Lt. Col. Kevin McAndrews
Public Affairs Officer

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Service for Maj. Gen. Wherley, wife, Ann, Monday 6 p.m.; Internment at Arlington National Cemetery Tuesday, 11 a.m.

WASHINGTON D.C. – A memorial service for Retired Maj. Gen. David F. Wherley Jr., and his wife, Ann, will be at the DC National Guard Armory in Washington, DC, at 6 p.m. Monday, June 29, 2009. The couple will be interred together at Arlington National Cemetery at 11 a.m. Tuesday, June 30.

Wherley and his wife, both 62, died from injuries suffered in the Washington DC Metro Rail accident June 22. They leave behind a son, Staff Sgt. David Wherley, a U.S. Army Golden Knight of Fayetteville, N.C., and daughter, Betsy Regan, son-in-law John, and 11-month-old granddaughter, Evann, of Charlotte, N.C.

“We are all deeply saddened by this sudden and tragic loss of General Wherley and his wife, Ann,” said Maj. Gen. Errol R. Schwartz, Commanding General of Joint Force Headquarters, District of Columbia National Guard. Wherley preceded Schwartz as Commanding General. “I am personally grieved by this unbelievable tragedy. David and Ann were two of the best people you could ever want to know. This community will grieve, as will many throughout the country who knew and loved them both.

General Wherley served as the Commanding General of the DC National Guard from July 2003 to June 2008. As Commanding General, he was responsible for operational readiness and command and control of the District of Columbia Army and Air National Guard units with an authorized strength of 2,500 soldiers and airmen.

Wherley and his wife were high school sweethearts at York Catholic High School in their hometown of York, Pa. They were coming up on their 40th wedding anniversary having been married July 19, 1969, the day before Neil Armstrong walked on the moon.

The general began his military career in 1969 when he received his commission as a second lieutenant through the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) from Fordham University, Bronx, N.Y. After he was released from active duty he joined the District of Columbia Air National Guard where he commanded two flying squadrons, served in a number of staff assignments and deployed as the deputy operations group

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commander for fighters at Prince Sultan Air Base, Saudi Arabia. He was a Fighter Weapons Instructor Course graduate in the F-4 and had more than 5,000 hours of flying time in a multitude of missions. Prior to appointment as Commanding General, he served as commander of the 113th Fighter Wing, Andrews Air Force Base, where he was responsible for two flying missions, the 121st Fighter Squadron with F-16 C/D and the 201st Airlift Squadron with C-40 and C-38A aircraft.

Under his leadership, the DC National Guard deployed several of its units, soldiers and airman in the Global War on Terrorism, including the 275th Military Police Co. Their successful mobilization and safe return were always his top priority. It was his imperative that soldiers and airmen have the best training they could possibly receive before going into harm's way, and will remain as one of his most important legacies.

Ann Wherley held a degree in Education from Kutztown University in Pennsylvania and worked as a mortgage broker for 10 years before she retired in 2007. She was a gourmet cook and worked as a docent for the United States Botanic Garden near the U.S. Capitol Building. The couple raised their children in Davidsonville, Md., and moved to Washington, DC after Wherley became Commanding General.

They were an inseparable couple, and General Wherley loved riding on the Metro. When he served as Commanding General, he would forgo the customary driver and vehicle afforded to him by his position and travel to meetings and events on the Metro. Wherley made frequent visits to wounded service members at Walter Reed, including First Lt. Russell Kaufmann, a DC Army Guardsman wounded while deployed in Iraq with the 275th Military Police Co. Kaufmann was hit through the neck by a sniper's bullet, suffering paralysis and brain injury. The Wherleys spent a great deal of their personal time with Kaufmann during his recovery.

On the day they died, the Wherleys had just finished an orientation program for the Walter Reid Volunteer Program. They both volunteered much of their time to the families of DC National Guard men and women, especially during their deployments.

Time and again, General Wherley would say his most challenging accomplishment was the establishment of the DC National Guard's Youth Challenge program. This required coordination between the National Guard Bureau, the Department of Defense and the District of Columbia City Government, resulting in a program now in its second successful year. In addition, he strongly supported the Family Readiness Program, Youth Leaders Camp and the About Face Program, all of which focused on supporting the families of our troops, especially during deployments, and strengthening the youth in our community through discipline, teaching them job skills and introducing the importance of education into their lives.

The Secretary of Labor appointed General Wherley to serve on an Advisory Committee for the U.S. Department of Labor's Job Corps in 2007. The Job Corps is the

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nation's largest and oldest federally funded job training and education program for at-risk youth ages 16-24. In the same year, he was a speaker at the Labor Department's annual Job Corps Leadership Summit, drawing attention to the many Job Corps participants and graduates who went on to successful military careers, some of whom have given their lives in the war in Iraq.

General Wherley was appointed to the Board of Directors of the District of Columbia Sports and Entertainment Commission in 2003 and served throughout his tenure as Commanding General. A baseball fan himself, he participated in the return of Major League Baseball to the District and was instrumental in the successful construction of Nationals Park.

With many more achievements not mentioned here, General Wherley would say the most satisfaction he had was being able to make a difference, not only in the organization and the units he served in and commanded, but in the individual lives of soldiers and airmen he was able to mentor. He encouraged all of his officers and non-commissioned officers to read the book, *Servant Leader*, and he tried each day to live by that creed—to serve the people he was appointed to lead.

The Wherleys are survived by their son, U.S. Army Staff Sgt. David Wherley, of Fayetteville, N.C., daughter, Betsy Regan, her husband, John, and granddaughter, Evann.

Other survivors: General Wherley's sisters, Clare E. Wherley of Berkeley Heights, N.J., and Jane Kircher and her husband, John, of Millersville, Md.; brother Clark Wherley and his wife, Peggy, of York, Pa. Mrs. Wherley's father, Harold "Chap" Strine, and his wife, Gloria, of York, Pa.; Mrs. Wherley's sisters, Patty Astor and her husband, Bob; Barbara Hoops and her husband, Charles, of York, Pa.; and Kathy Strine of York, Pa., and a brother John Strine and his wife, Lisa, of York, Pa.

In lieu of flowers, please send donations by check to the "Ann and David Wherley Charitable Gift Fund" c/o Lassus Wherley, 1 Academy Street, New Providence, N.J., 07974. Make checks payable to the Ann and David Wherley Charitable Gift Fund. Please include the name and address of the donor on the check.

For more information, please contact Lt. Col. Kevin McAndrews at (202) 685-9862 or (202) 821-7181.